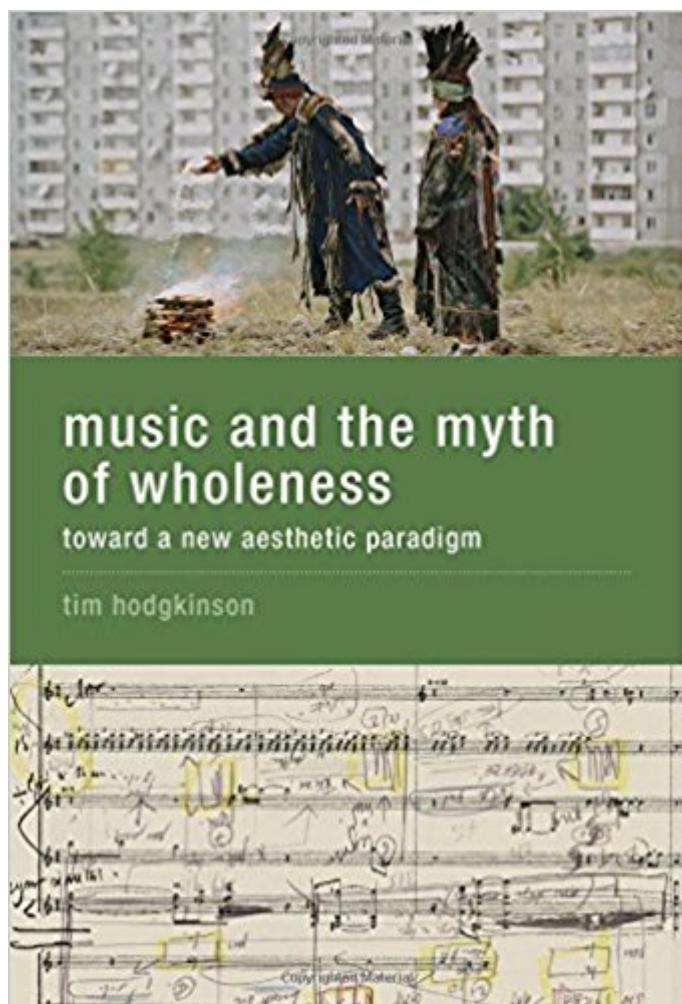


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# Music And The Myth Of Wholeness: Toward A New Aesthetic Paradigm (MIT Press)



## Synopsis

In this book, Tim Hodgkinson proposes a theory of aesthetics and music grounded in the boundary between nature and culture within the human being. His analysis discards the conventional idea of the human being as an integrated whole in favor of a rich and complex field in which incompatible kinds of information -- biological and cultural -- collide. It is only when we acknowledge the clash of body and language within human identity that we can understand how art brings forth the special form of subjectivity potentially present in aesthetic experiences. As a young musician, Hodgkinson realized that music was, in some mysterious way, "of itself" -- not isolated from life, but not entirely continuous with it, either. Drawing on his experiences as a musician, composer, and anthropologist, Hodgkinson shows how when we listen to music a new subjectivity comes to life in ourselves. The normal mode of agency is suspended, and the subjectivity inscribed in the music comes toward us as a formative "other" to engage with. But this is not our reproduction of the composer's own subjectivation; when we perform our listening of the music, we are sharing the formative risks taken by its maker. To examine this in practice, Hodgkinson looks at the work of three composers who have each claimed to stimulate a new way of listening: Pierre Schaeffer, John Cage, and Helmut Lachenmann.

## Book Information

Series: MIT Press

Hardcover: 280 pages

Publisher: The MIT Press; 1 edition (February 12, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0262034069

ISBN-13: 978-0262034067

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #1,628,336 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #70 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Theory, Composition & Performance > Philosophy & Social Aspects #632 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Ethnic & International > Ethnomusicology #1040 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Theory, Composition & Performance > Appreciation

## Customer Reviews

A boundary-spanning exploration of music that culminates in a profound glimpse into a unique human quality -- the imaginative and aesthetic experience -- with the added pleasure of traveling through Hodgkinson's own creative process, which stands as an exemplar of Janusian thinking. A truly mind-expanding read. (Gerard J. Puccio, Chair and Professor, International Center for Studies in Creativity, The State University College at Buffalo) Arguing for a disentanglement between biological organism and cultural backdrop in how we understand and derive meaning in art, Tim Hodgkinson turns some of our most cherished aesthetic convictions on their head. Whether or not one agrees with all of his premises, it is difficult to imagine anyone better equipped to undertake this ambitious task. Drawing on direct experience as improvising musician and a wide range of theoretical sources, he moves fluidly between disparate worlds as his account unfolds. An important and impressive contribution. (Ed Sarath, Professor of Music, University of Michigan; author of *Improvisation, Creativity, and Consciousness: Jazz as Integral Template for Music, Education, and Society*)

Tim Hodgkinson is a composer, musician, and writer. In 1968, he cofounded (with Fred Frith) the politically and musically radical group Henry Cow. His compositions have been performed at concerts and festivals around the world.

Outstanding and thought provoking!!!

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